



DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION OF FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Steve Sears/Acting Chair, Bob Durand/Acting Vice Chair, Sasha Dyer, Emma Ellsworth, John Organ, Matthew Sisk, Ron Amidon/Commissioner/DFG, Mark S. Tisa/Director, Jon Regosin/Deputy Director, Kris McCarthy/Associate Director/Finance and Administration, Eve Schlüter/Assistant Director/NHESP, Michael Huguenin/Assistant Director/Wildlife, Trina Moruzzi/ Assistant Director/Operations, Todd Richards/Assistant Director/Fisheries, Nicole McSweeney/Acting Chief/Information and Education, Pat Huckery/Northeast Wildlife District Manager, Todd Olanyk/Central Wildlife District Manager, Jason Zimmer/Southeast Wildlife District Manager, Andrew Madden/Western Wildlife District Manager, Joe Rogers/Conn. Valley Wildlife District Manager, Jennifer Sulla/General Counsel/DFG, Major Kevin Clayton/OLE, Lieutenant Michael Lees/OLE

DATE: September 12, 2022

LOCATION: MassWildlife Field Headquarters, Westborough

Acting Chair Sears opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Durand to accept the minutes from the August meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Organ; the minutes were unanimously approved.

Acting Chair's Comments

Acting Chair Sears reported that he and other Board members had visited the Southeast and Connecticut Valley district offices and met with the staff in the prior few weeks. He thanked the District Managers for accommodating the visits and stated that it was wonderful to meet the staff that are on the ground around the state.

Commissioner's Comments

The Chair reported that he was deferring the Commissioner's comments because Commissioner Amidon would be unavoidably late to the meeting.

Director's Comments

Director Tisa reported that MassWildlife had received authorization to have a public hearing on the proposed field trial regulatory amendments on October 20 at 11:00 a.m.

The Director introduced Major Kevin Clayton of the Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) to the meeting, stating that the Major was not new to the OLE but had been promoted to Major in April of this year. Director Tisa reported that he has known Major Clayton for many years and he has always been a friend, in addition to attending many professional meetings together. The Director said he looks forward to continuing to work with Major Clayton in his new, expanded role.

Law Enforcement Comments

Major Kevin Clayton briefly introduced himself to the Board members. He grew up on Cape Cod, and worked at the Cape Cod National Seashore in high school and college, being very interested in birds and natural resources, generally. He reported that he had worked with Laurie McGyver, a noted piper plover researcher, during his time at the National Seashore. He stated that he started his career as a Cape Cod National Seashore Natural Resources Officer, then moved to OLE and served as a captain in the Southeast area. He then became the Deputy Chief of Enforcement, Coastal, and is now the Deputy Chief of Enforcement, Inland. Major Clayton added that he has an M.B.A. in Public Administration, and that he sees OLE and MassWildlife as having an important mission in common: solving problems for the Commonwealth. Each agency has different views on the issues, but they work together to find solutions.

The Major then introduced Lieutenant Mike Lees, who would be giving the OLE report. Major Clayton reported that OLE will use a different format from the one previously employed, and that he will send different regional supervisors to the meetings, so that the Board members can meet them all and hear from different parts of the state.

Lieut. Lees reported he serves in the C5 region, which is primarily south-central Massachusetts, and that he has been with the OLE for 18 years and has enjoyed every day. He reported that there are currently 96 officers in OLE, 28 of whom are inland, 37 are assigned to the coast, 5 are recreational safety, 2 investigative, and 2 dealing with hazardous waste. There is one new officer in training and 2 current recruits.

Lieut. Lees reported that the MEP is transitioning from summer recreational activities to hunting season activities and other seasonal enforcement issues for the sister agencies. He provided the Board with a brief overview of actions connected to the current recreational seasons and activities and fish-and-wildlife-related examples of calls for service that Environmental Police officers had responded to in the previous month. The Acting Chair thanked Lieut. Lees for his report and congratulated Major Clayton on his appointment.

Personnel Report (Jon Regosin)

Deputy Director Jon Regosin, stepping in for Assistant Director of Operations Trina Moruzzi, who had a last-minute conflict, presented the Board with the hiring manager's recommendation for a backfill position in the Western Wildlife District, including highlights of the candidates' qualifications.

New Hire

<i>Employee</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Location</i>
Colby Kellogg-Youndt	Western District Wildlife Technician Wildlife Technician II	Dalton

Mr. Durand moved to accept the personnel report as presented; Ms. Dyer seconded the motion; the vote in favor was unanimous.

Southeast Pine Barrens (Jon Regosin)

Deputy Director Regosin reported that the agency had completed a review of two matters raised by a member of the public related to the Southeast Pine Barrens. Relative to AD Makepeace's Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) permitting, Dr. Regosin reported that the Board was provided with a memo prepared by NHESP Assistant Director Schlüter. In summary, he reported that the work being carried out by the company fully complies with the MESA permitting and mitigation requirements as specified in statute and regulation. For example, approximately 437 acres of high-quality pine barrens habitat supporting numerous state-listed species have been permanently protected by AD Makepeace

pursuant to the MESA permit mitigation requirements. Relative to a Conservation Restriction (CR) held by MassWildlife over Plymouth Town Forest, the Deputy Director reported that MassWildlife is supportive, in principle, of a request from the Town of Plymouth to amend the CR to allow limited additional parking. The amendment will facilitate limited additional recreational access, consistent with the purposes of the CR, and without negatively impacting rare plants or other habitats.

Central Wildlife District Overview (Todd Olanyk)

Central District Manager Todd Olanyk provided the Board with an overview of Central District activities and responsibilities.

Mr. Olanyk provided the Board with an overview of the District staffing structure, explaining that the District Wildlife Biologist and Fisheries Biologist oversee and work with the four Wildlife Technicians, and all work in coordination with the program Assistant Directors and project leaders in Westborough. There is also a Clerk and a Stewardship Biologist in each District, and a Land Agent, who works for the Department but is closely integrated with the MassWildlife staff. Mr. Olanyk introduced his newest staff member, Rebecca Colby, who started as the District Aquatic Biologist in June of this year.

The District Manager reported that the Central District office serves as a physical location within the District for in-person license and permit sales, game check, certified weights for the Freshwater Sportfishing Program awards, and to offer local advice on hunting and fishing spots and questions about wildlife species such as turkey, bear, and coyote. He highlighted the trout stocking that the District conducts every year, reporting that the Central District distributes 90-100,000 trout annually in spring, summer, and fall in 109 waterbodies, some with multiple stocking locations. District staff also assist the biologists in Westborough with numerous fisheries projects and surveys, including in the Quabbin and Wachusett reservoirs and approximately 40 coldwater sites in July and August. The District staff will also investigate reports of fish kills to determine whether they are natural or due to manmade events.

Mr. Olanyk then reported on the wildlife projects and research that the District participates in every year, including its pheasant-stocking activities (13,000 bird a year) at 40+ locations district-wide; the Large Animal Response Team (LART) calls the District receives and responds to; black bear research and collaring; and many other wildlife monitoring projects, including eagle surveys and banding, ruffed grouse drumming surveys, wood duck box surveys, waterfowl indicated pair surveys, deer pellet transects, and goose banding.

He also reported on the District's habitat management and stewardship responsibilities on approximately 55,00 acres, with 51 WMAs and 56 Conservation Restrictions (CR) and Wildlife Conservation Easements (WCE) in the Central District. Mr. Olanyk discussed the extensive staff's mowing, brush cutting, and invasive species control activities, as well as its cooperative work with the Habitat Program conducting forestry practices, applying prescribed fire (with 5 District staff as qualified fire crew members), enhancing early successional habitat, and overseeing the work of contractors on MassWildlife lands. He reported that the Central District has 462 acres under 24 separate Agricultural License Agreements and over 2,000 acres in a mechanical mowing rotation.

In addition, Mr. Olanyk reported that the District has been involved in recreational enhancement activities, including the staff's work grading 8 miles of road and adding 4,000 tons of gravel to the Birch Hill WMA roadways in 2022, which amounted to 185 dump truck loads, to improve the access. Mr. Olanyk also noted that his staff improved 17 parking areas around the District and erected 32 new WMA signs and kiosks. They also assisted at three fishing clinics in 2022 and taught Bowhunter Education at the 2022 Mass. Junior Conservation Camp.

After a brief discussion, the Chair and other Board members thanked Mr. Olanyk for his work in the Central District and his very informative report.

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Amidon joined the meeting and reported that he had attended an event at the recently renovated Hingham Boat ramp for the Hingham Harbor Day celebration. He reported that this is a heavily used boat ramp and fishing pier and said that municipalities are the best partners for recreation enhancement. The Commissioner also reported that the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and EEA Secretary were holding another Earth Week series of events, noting that there would be a September 19 event at Wellfleet's Herring River Harbor restoration project, which is the largest on the east coast down to Florida, and a land acquisition celebration at Mt. Watatic on September 21.

Confirm October Meeting Date

After a brief discussion, members confirmed the date and time for the October Fisheries and Wildlife Board meeting on October 20, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Members also discussed the November meeting, and selected Monday, November 7, 2022, at 9:00 a.m., and the December meeting: December 21, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Member's Comments

Mr. Sisk thanked the Southeast District Manager for an excellent visit.

Ms. Dyer thanked Mr. Olanyk for his presentation, stating that she is learning so much about the agency and really appreciates the presentations the staff are providing.

Acting Vice Chair Durand also thanked Mr. Olanyk for his report on the Central District. He also reported that the Worcester County League meeting was approaching and he was looking forward to visiting with that sporting community.

Ms. Ellsworth reported that she had enjoyed the visit to the Connecticut Valley District office. She also reported that she had attended the DCR landscape designation outreach meeting earlier in the week and offered her kudos to Habitat Program Manager Brian Hawthorne for his excellent presentation representing the agency: it made her proud to be on the Board.

Mr. Organ also thanked Mr. Olanyk, stating that he had known him for a long time, before he joined MassWildlife, adding that Mr. Olanyk exhibits excellent leadership. He also thanked all the District Managers for the District reports.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Durand to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sisk.

The vote was unanimous, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernie Foster

Acting Secretary

List of documents presented to the Board in its September meeting packets

September agenda

August minutes draft

E. Schlüter memo RE AD Makepeace

J. Zimmer letter RE Town of Plymouth Town Forest CR amendment

Personnel report

NHESP tax donation report

Confidential executive session packet

Public hearing packet (notice and draft regulations in redline and clean versions) in advance of the
October hearing RE field trials proposed amendments